

# Northwest Power, Conservation Heavyweights Weigh-in for Efficiency

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Jumping on the ever-larger bandwagon, three of the Pacific Northwest's public- and private-sector power industry heavyweights announced Tuesday they had forged a regional effort to further improve power use efficiency throughout the traditionally hydroelectric-dependent region. The effort will be led by a newly named voluntary Energy Efficiency Task Force comprised of electric utility, business, government, environmental and energy efficiency representatives.

[PacifiCorp](#)'s Portland, OR-based Pacific Power utility unit, the federal [Bonneville Power Administration](#) (BPA) and the regional planning Northwest Power and Conservation Council (NPCC) said they formed the new effort as a means of addressing climate change concerns, regional population growth, rising energy use and the escalating costs of new power sources, which in the Northwest include natural gas and wind-generated electricity.

Top officials at Pacific Power, BPA and NPCC wrote to the governors, industry leaders and various stakeholders last Friday, calling for greater regionwide collaboration to address these issues. They emphasized that "to achieve the vision of a clean energy future, we will need to rethink and retool our energy supply," calling out energy efficiency as the most economical energy resource.

Cochairs of the new group are Tom Karier, the Washington state member on the NPCC; Pat Reiten, Pacific Power president; and Steve Wright, the top administrator/CEO of BPA. Twenty-five state, environmental, utility and general business leaders make up the task force membership.

Other utility leaders signing the letter included [Portland General Electric](#) CEO Peggy Fowler, [Avista Corp.](#) CEO Scott Morris and Puget Sound Energy CEO Steve Reynolds.

Saying the region's "energy landscape continues to change dramatically," the new task force members agreed to form seven technical work groups to (1) review energy efficiency best practices; (2) analyze state efficiency incentives; (3) research customers' changed electricity use patterns; (4) explore smart grid techniques; (5) identify more community-based energy efficiency action; (6) explore new, more creative ways to communicate energy efficiency's benefits to consumers; and (7) develop more efficient means of delivering efficiency programs to consumers.

The task force is operating under the assumption that energy demand will continue to grow, new generation options will continue to be more costly, wholesale power costs are markedly more expensive, utilities face increased state mandates on efficiency, and climate change's higher profile has all energy consumers wanting to know what they can do individually and collectively.